

# BES 6001 – Responsibility Matters

Increasingly, we are all looking to purchase products and use services which come from companies who do the right thing, who are responsible. This is true in our every day lives, as consumers and in business.

Never has there been more demand for corporate social responsibility. Companies should demonstrate their sustainability credentials; encompass social and economic dimensions along with supply chain management and product stewardship. This is particularly true within the flooring industry.

## What is Responsible Sourcing?

Responsible Sourcing is defined in BS8902 - Responsible sourcing sector certification schemes for construction products - Specification as: 'The management of sustainable development in the provision or procurement of a products.'

Sustainable development is further defined as: 'An enduring, balanced approach to economic activity, environmental responsibility and social progress.\*'

For many years now there has been certification for responsible sourcing, including Fair Trade; RFS (Responsible Fishing Scheme) and FSC (Forest Stewardship Council). Whilst the FSC standard provides assurance for products harvested from well managed forests - including wood flooring - there hasn't been to date a standard available for all flooring and construction products.

## What is BES 6001?

The BES 6001 standard, from BRE Global, is a means of securing certification to demonstrate through independent, third-party certification, that products certified against the scheme have been responsibly sourced. BES 6001 does not focus on a company's site, but products or ranges manufactured at one or more sites.

BES 6001 is a framework standard for Responsible Sourcing, which sets out requirements under three main headings: Organisational Management; Supply Chain Management and Environmental and Social Responsibility Management. To meet the standard, companies must satisfy certain compulsory elements. Additionally there are higher levels of compliance that can result in a higher performance rating being awarded.

Depending on a company's performance against the criteria, ratings are awarded on a Pass; Good; Very Good and Excellent basis.

Polyflor continues to set the bar high, having been the only certified flooring manufacturer in 2015, achieving a Very Good rating for Version 3 of the standard. By achieving Very Good, Polyflor has satisfied the compulsory sections and conforms to higher levels of compliance, which has been a massive undertaking for the company - involving production, all internal departments and supply chain. Certification is available on [www.greenbooklive.com](http://www.greenbooklive.com).

## The Importance of BES 6001

The UK Contractor's Group (representing over 30 leading construction companies who together account for a third of the UK construction industry turnover) state that: 'UKCG members support and give preference to procuring products which are able to demonstrate compliance with a recognised responsible sourcing scheme, certified by a third party.'

BES 6001 is just that. It is an increasingly important and valuable standard for customers who want to procure flooring with sound environmental credentials and traceability, from socially aware and ethical suppliers. Without doubt the standard helps customers make better informed decisions when selecting suppliers.

The hard work and challenges set out by the BES 6001 framework has driven us to scrutinize our own supply chain more than ever before with even more commitment to using trusted, local suppliers who are ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 certified. Additionally, stringent and demanding environmental objectives have been set and managerial procedures and policies improved.

BES 6001 has also given us more direction with regards to social responsibility management - with particular focus on internal procedures regarding employees, as well as how we engage with our local communities and stakeholders in general.

Furthermore, the use of Polyflor products with BES 6001 certification and individual BRE ratings can potentially contribute significantly to the available points in section MAT 03 of a BREEAM Assessment. Where many companies typically contribute 1 point through an environmental management system such as ISO 14001, Polyflor can provide an additional 3 points for its BES 6001 Very Good certification. For more information on this, refer to the 'Maximising BREEAM Credits with Polyflor' pages in this document. BES 6001 also secures additional credits within the Code for Sustainable Homes.

\* Source: [www.greenbooklive.com](http://www.greenbooklive.com)

